

JSMF Public Radio News

Radio for People Who Listen

A Publication of the Jack Straw Foundation

June 1990

Production Center Nears Completion

Remodeling to Include Studios, Archives

Work is now under way to construct studios, workrooms and offices for a regional production center in the new University District headquarters of the Jack Straw Foundation. Jack Straw Production, as the new facility will be called, is designed to create high quality, diverse programming for broadcast primarily by noncommercial radio stations, both here in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Joan Rabinowitz has been named Interim Production Manager.

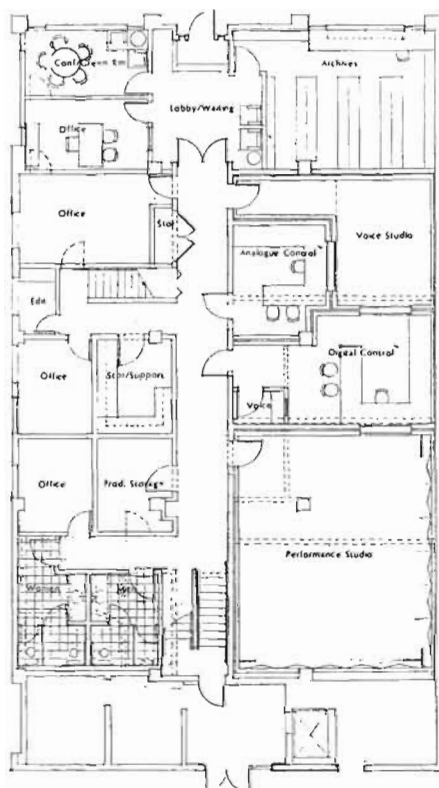
The production center will provide resources and personnel for both Jack Straw and independent producers to develop innovative programming. It will also serve as a regional training center for those who wish to broaden their knowledge and skills.

Jack Straw Production will include recording studios intended to accommodate drama and small musical groups or soloists. The acoustics have been designed to provide adequate reverberation, good sound diffusion, and low background noise.

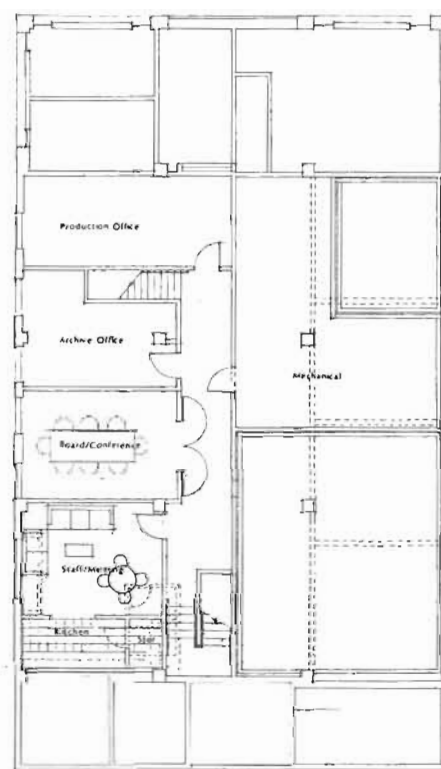
It is envisioned that other nonprofit organizations may want to use the facility to produce public service announcements, or to develop educational materials. Commercial groups may want to rent time, or composers to record their works.

The new facility is located in the old Warren Building at the corner of Roosevelt Way N.E. and N.E. 43rd. In addition to the main floor and mezzanine that will be the studios and offices of Jack Straw, there are two more floors of offices.

Jack Straw Production will be a unique service center for the greater Pacific Northwest.



MAIN FLOOR



MEZZANINE

New Facility to Open by August

When the Jack Straw Board of Directors decided to purchase the old Warren Building in Seattle's University District last year, it was with the recording and production of innovative radio in mind. The best local acoustic designers and architects were then sought for the renovation project.

The well-known firms of Towne, Richards and Chaudiere, acoustical engineers; McKinley Gordon Architects, specializing in broadcast studios; and Lease

Crutcher Lewis, contractors, formed the team to design and build the Jack Straw Production studios.

The completion date for the renovation is mid-July 1990. In addition to the production facilities there will be an archive of records, tapes and CDs, and the offices of the Foundation's administrative staff.

An open house is planned for around the first of August. Details will be given in the next issue of the newsletter.

Documentary Wins National Award

Producer Joan Rabinowitz and the Jack Straw Foundation were recently awarded a National Federation of Community Broadcasters 1990 Community Radio Award for the radio documentary series "From Composer to Performance". The awards honor "productions that exemplify outstanding and creative use of radio," and were open to programs broadcast on non-commercial community radio stations during the calendar year 1989. "From Composer to Performance", which looks at the creative process behind contemporary chamber music, was broadcast on radio stations throughout the United States. According to one of the NFCB



judges, the series is "a unique insight into the process of music, told in a way that

captivates the listener."

The awards were divided into four main categories, Station Promotion/Community Service, Multi-cultural/Special Audience programming, Entertainment (Arts), and News/Public Affairs. "From Composer to Performance" was awarded a Silver Reel as a "Special National Entertainment Program". Other winners in this category were Seattle producer Ross Reynolds for "The Indies: Independent Record Labels"; the Office Français de Realisation et Diffusion Audio-Visuelle, Paris, France, for "Le Jazz Club from Paris"; and Peter Troxell, KUSP Santa Cruz, CA, for "Surf City Live".

Radio Projects Explore Music, Culture

Jack Straw has two new projects in the works, both by Executive Producer Joan Rabinowitz. The first, as yet untitled, will be a series on twentieth century classical music featuring highlights of concert recordings of the New Performance Group.

Twentieth century classical music represents an ongoing and continually developing part of our culture. Now in residence at Cornish College of the Arts, the New Performance Group musicians have been committed to presenting this music to the community for over ten years. Flutist Paul Taub explains that "we're twentieth century people and it has to be done — there are new ideas here." Taub finds that it is interesting and fun, and besides, "it's not the nineteenth century any more." For audience member Jenn Brandon, "There is a lot of individuality in these works."

According to Rabinowitz, the radio programs will appeal to some and challenge others, but will give all a chance to hear a variety of this century's music, from Berio's "Folk Songs" to "Om Shanti" by Seattle composer Janice Giteck.

The New Performance Group radio series will be broadcast on Pacific Northwest non-commercial radio stations. They are being produced with support from the Seattle, King County and Washington State Arts Commissions.

The second project is called "Other Worlds in Washington". This series of radio programs on traditional folk arts will include live recordings and interviews with musicians from different ethnic communities. Each program will feature a musician or ensemble important in that community, such as Cambodian musician Sam Ang Sam or Native American storyteller Johnny Moses. Recently returned from a trip to Tashkent, the Seattle klezmer ensemble the Mazeltones will be followed from from a public performance, such as

at the Folklife Festival, back into the Ashkenazi Jewish community, where they perform for weddings, bar mitzvahs, and private parties.

How the musicians learn, their role in the community, how traditions are preserved and maintained, and the nature of the music they perform will all be investigated in this series. When completed, "Other Worlds in Washington" will present the variety and vitality, as well as the difficulties, of local traditional music.

New Talents Brought To Board

Two outstanding women, Laura Hall and Mojuana Tolon, joined Jack Straw's Board of Directors in the most recent election. Both bring impressive backgrounds in community service.

Laura Hall has found time in her busy schedule since stepping down from an Edmonds City Council seat she had held since 1981. Ms Hall's interest in arts and the media began with her student days at Whitman College Conservatory of Music and continued through her involvement with the first closed-circuit TV at Columbia University in New York City. Her activities as a community activist and

volunteer in Snohomish County range widely from city government to cultural arts.

Mojuana Tolon has a rare combination of interests. She holds a Master's degree in Fine Arts from the Pratt Institute, New York, and currently serves on the Seattle Arts Commission. Tolon is also a Certified Public Accountant, licensed in Washington state. This latter area of expertise won her election to the office of Treasurer of the Jack Straw Foundation.

The Jack Straw Foundation is fortunate to have such talented and experienced people join the team.



GOOD RADIO

by Nancy Keith

For most supporters of Jack Straw, it comes as no surprise that we are always looking for the outspoken critic and the new idea. We like them best when they come on us like the trick bucket of cold water balanced on the doorjam, just when we had all our habits and assumptions neatly pressed and ready for company.

That's why we liked the jolt delivered a few weeks ago to the cream of public radio management and producers at the annual public radio conference in Washington D.C. Naturally, there had to be a panel on "Radio in the Nineties" (Nighties?). Among the speakers was Mark Starowicz, executive producer of some of the best of Canadian radio's public affairs programs over the past 15 years.

Starowicz said "Television is becoming Radio," meaning that since the day it began, television has gradually taken over everything that made radio an appealing medium. First TV took over the laughter and drama, leaving radio with music and a little news. Now, he points out, M-TV is taking over the music format, and radio's one remaining virtue of portability is challenged by tiny TVs that can be carried in a purse. He didn't mention the growth of "telephone-talk" radio, but he dumped a bucket big enough to douse this audience of radiophiles with serious gloom.

He did have the decency to throw us a towel. He said that even with all of television's accumulated appeal and bag of tricks, new research shows a growing number of consumers are tuning television out. If radio is to be a potent force in the 21st century, Starowicz said, it will have to speak to people in a way and on a level that television has left behind. He believes people are becoming suspicious of its unreality, the manufactured glamor of "Dallas" and "Falcon Crest", the manipulated and threatening excitement of cops and crime.

His own recommendation for radio was a new kind of drama that could reflect and

sometimes ennoble the life common to people who are not rich and famous. He made a stirring appeal for children's programming and for drama that could draw a whole family to the radio together. He urged public radio to find new ways to tell the human story with art and audio sophistication but with an unswerving loyalty to the unglamorized, daily existence

KSER Prepares To Go On Air

by Nancy Keith

Go ahead—call us optimists. We think that some day in early December this year, you will be able to turn on the radio, scan down to 90.7, and find KSER-FM, Radio For The Adventurous Listener.

With our construction permit due out of the FCC any day, physical plans for KSER are drawn up and ready, and the most important components of a community station—the people—are volunteering, planning, training and producing in growing numbers.

The last issue of this newsletter introduced you to the twelve members of the KSER Citizens Advisory Committee. They've been actively spreading the word about KSER and recruiting through the wide cross-section of communities they represent. Every week brings two or three new people into KSER's growing circle of volunteers and supporters.

In this community north of Seattle, we find a common feeling of living in the shadow of Seattle's media spotlight. There are too few chances to hear local problems and provocative debate on the local issues. It is an ideal spot for a community station like KSER, with a strong commitment to public affairs programming and expanding the arts and information content on radio. This is just what Jack Straw lives for.

Local public affairs programs will be presented in a nightly program slot by a whole series of production teams. KRAB's International News Team demonstrated this approach can be done, regularly and well, by volunteers. On KSER, each team will specialize in one topic such as Educa-

that most of us call life. (Does anyone remember Ma Perkins?)

Can this kind of radio lure listeners away from the bouncing colored pictures? Can radio drama build and hold an audience—let alone offer "family" content? Conventional wisdom in public radio says "no". What do you think?



FCC Expected To Approve Construction

May 1, 1990 was the date given by the FCC ending the public notice period prior to final approval for a Construction Permit for KSER-FM Everett, Washington.

With strong assurance that no other party has filed against Jack Straw for the KSER frequency, 90.7 on the protected educational portion of the FM spectrum, formal FCC award of the permit is anticipated in June of this year. The on-air date is scheduled for December 1990.

"The community, our KSER Advisory Committee, and eager volunteers are ready to roll up (their) sleeves and put this community station on-air," said station manager Nancy Keith.

The KSER-FM studio facilities, located at the Highpoint Plaza in Lynnwood, are scheduled to begin construction by mid-June. Immediately following award of the Construction Permit, the tower will be built on Jack Straw property adjacent to the studios.

See KSER, page four

Grantwriter Named

Former Jack Straw board member and program producer Herb Levy has been hired as the first Development Coordinator of the Jack Straw Foundation. The new position, to begin June 15, 1990, will seek support from private corporations, government arts and media agencies, and philanthropic organizations. Grants and other contributions will fund the production of diverse, high-quality radio programs, and communications training projects.

Levy is currently the Artistic Director and President of Soundwork Northwest, and has been a grant writer and administrator for the Seattle Art Museum and Cornish College of the Arts, where he also taught electronic music. He is Seattle's best-known advocate for new music, serving as juror for local and national arts commissions, and curator and producer for numerous events. Mr. Levy is also the President of the New Music Alliance, a national organization.

New Station Will Offer Innovations

KSER, from page 3

tion, Environment, Business, Social Issues, Politics, Minority Affairs, or Health. They'll do regular programs that include news with a local angle, interviews, debates, commentaries, and maybe even some drama.

Over thirty people are already planning and training for these Production Teams, and workshops on broadcast news writing and interviewing are coming soon.

KSER will also offer the spoken word as art through a number of dramatic reading programs. Everett volunteer Literature Coordinator Michael Hooper has asked nine reading volunteers to start a list of books that present "original or powerful insight about human life — revealing the extraordinary nature of the everyday, the 'familiar stranger', the other 'as if seen for the first time'". Also on his list is "social criticism that works to rattle the

cage of modern America, causing us to question assumptions and habits".

KSER volunteers are already out in the community, recording presentations at both the community colleges and any other forum where issues and ideas are discussed. This level of interest and commitment has been achieved almost entirely by word-of-mouth recruiting. With the FCC Construction Permit in hand soon, we will be taking KSER to a wider audience via local press and radio.

Along with new program producers, KSER will also feature many of the producers whose programs made KRAB-FM a rich and rare radio experience.

Finally, during the summer months when studios and transmitter are under construction, directors for music, public affairs, and operations will be added to the KSER staff. For more information on these staff positions, contact Nancy Keith, Station Manager, at 252-6505 in Everett.

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